

Man and Eternity *in Islam*

by

Dr. Muḥammad M. Ghâlî



شقيقه



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Table of Contents	Page
<i>Foreword</i>	7
Chapter One	
I. ʾĀdam.....	9
II. ʾĀdam in Eden	10
III. ʾĀdam's Two Sons.....	13
IV. Temptation	15
V. Prophets and Messengers	18
VI. Miracles	20
A- Nūḥ (Noah)	20
B- ʾIbrāhīm (Abraham)	23
C- Mūsā (Moses)	29
D- ʿĪsā (Jesus)	34
E- Muḥammad	39
Chapter Two	
I. Judaism	43
II. Christianity	45
- Migration	48
- The Crusades	48
III. ʾIslām	49

Table of Contents	Page
<i>Chapter Three</i>	
I. The Human Self	51
II. The Jinn	53
III. The Angels	55
<i>Chapter Four</i>	
- Worship in ʿIslām	59
I. Prayers	59
II. Fasting (Ṣawm)	63
III. Poor - Dues (Zakâh)	65
IV. Jihâd	67
V. Pilgrimage (Ḥajj)	69
- The Farewell Pilgrimage	71
- Man and Eternity	75

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Foreword

In "Moral Freedom," the basic goal was to stress the importance of the Muslim creed in the Oneness of 'Allâh, Exalted be He. The articles there, written by eminent scholars, depict the unshakable belief in the Oneness of the Creator, Who created the angels, the jinn and the human race, among all the other creatures about whom human knowledge is very modest as well as those who are beyond human recognition.

The concept of world peace dominates the few pages of the Pamphlet, "Islām and World peace." Although a cherished goal of humanity, world peace has been rarely achieved since the early days of the two sons of 'Âdam, one of whom killed the other. The conspiracies of the disbelievers against the Messengers of 'Allâh, since the time of Nûh (Noah) up to the time of Muḥammad keep reminding all people of faith that world security is unattainable mainly because of the absence of justice on the universal plane, the irregularity of paying the Zakât in the Muslim world, and the propagation of usury and materialism over the earth.

The third important concept revealed in the Qur'ân is the belief in the Hereafter. The absence of conviction in such a creed leads to the spread of disbelief, which is the surest way to lead man astray, misguided by evil illusions, to which man by nature is too weak to resist.

As portrayed in the Qur'ân, human nature which is the main theme in the following pages, has all the possibilities for good and evil; but the fact is that , with all devilish instigations and mundane allure-

ments, the percentage of human beings who still keep to the Straight Path are a very modest minority .

In spite of the fact that in Paradise ³Ādam was an exalted creature, and was taught by 'Allāh all the names of other creatures, he did not keep himself aloof from sin. Although sent down to earth after offering his repentance for his sin, the progeny of 'Ādam still preserve the ability to invent new ideas, investments and media, and to give names to these new inventions.

But with all these innate human abilities and instincts, the two opposed inclinations of good and evil still dominate his actions, and the choice of evil actions represents the majority.

Muhammad Mahmūd Ghāfi

Chapter One

﴿وَكَانَ الْإِنْسَانُ أَكْثَرَ شَيْءٍ جَدَلًا﴾ [الكهف: ٥٤]

(And man has always been mostly (fond) of disputes) "Al-Kahf, the Cave- 54"

I. ^ʿĀdam

1. The story of ^ʿĀdam, the father of the human race, is nowhere so distinctly drawn as it is in the Ever Glorious Qur'ān. For ten consecutive ^ʿāyât (verses), 'Allâh, Exalted be He, is addressing the angels that He, Exalted be He, is making in the earth a successor. Unable to understand the Divine Decree, the angels said, (Will You make therein one who will corrupt in it and shed blood, while we are the ones who extol Your praise and hallow for you?

Then the answer came with the Divine truth' (Surely I know whatsoever you do not know) "Al-Baqarah, The Cow- 30". Understandably the angels had existed before the creation of ^ʿĀdam and the human race. It is also clear that some of the creatures before ^ʿĀdam, the jinn, had been corruptors and had indulged into feuds causing bloodshed in the earth . So the human race came as successors to the jinn, who had been in the earth before ^ʿĀdam, and after the angels.

2. The proof soon came when 'Allâh, Exalted be He, taught all the names to 'Adam. Then He asked the angels if they knew these names; and the angels had to confess their ignorance, since they only knew what 'Allâh, Exalted be He, taught them for He is (The Ever-Knowing, The Ever-Wise) "Al-Baqarah, The Cow- 31".
- 3 The names taught to ^ʿĀdam would evidently include all His Fair Names, the names of the angels and the jinn, of ^ʿĀdam's race, be-

sides the names of the things he will find on the earth, and even the names of the things he invents during his life and the lives of his descendants on earth. So the ability to think, using the organs of the ears, the eyes, and the hearts, have made possible for the human race to achieve all forms of culture and civilisation. Such achievements are referred to in one ³âyah "verse" in Sûrah (chapter) "Ar-Rahmân, ³âyah-4" The All-Merciful" stating that 'Allâh taught man (distinct speech).

4. When the angels were told the names from 'Âdam, they hurriedly supplicated to 'Allâh, and confessed their ignorance. The Divine Message came clear that 'Allâh, Exalted be He, is reminding them that He had told them that He knows the Unseen of the heavens and the earth and whatsoever the angels display and whatsoever they used to keep back. "Al-Baqarah, The Cow-33".
5. Then came the test for the angels when 'Allâh, Exalted be He, commanded them to prostrate themselves to 'Âdam. So they all prostrated themselves, except ³Iblîs, who (refused, and waxed proud, and was one of the disbelievers) 'Al-Baqarah, The Cow-34". Such an unprecedented act of disobedience on the part of ³Iblîs has been an inherited trait of some of the descendants of ³Iblîs (Satan) ever since. Here again, obviously many of the descendants of 'Âdam, after the fall, have also fallen into disobedience.

II. Âdam in Eden

1. In Eden, 'Âdam was given a spouse: (Arabic Hawwâ, ³Hebrew (hawwah) and both lived in opulence for a time, until he was urged to eat of the Tree. Pre-Qur'anic Revelations give the meaning of Hawwâ ³as "life, clan, snake "Enc.Br. vol. 18, p.898'.

Such names are really unnecessary since all Revelations agree that

she was created from man, ²Ādam; for all humanity is addressed in these Words, Lo you mankind, be pious to your (Lord, Who created you of one self "person", and created from it its spouse, and from the two disseminated many men and women) "²An-Nisâ", "²Women- 1". Thus the concept of "woman" being more exposed than man to the wiles of the serpent, and to the falling into sin, thus dragging her husband with her) is nowhere specifically mentioned in the Qur²ân.

2. **Paradise** is a Persian word meaning an enclosed pleasure garden, found in (the three late passages of the Hebrew Old Testament, Neh. ii8, Cant. iv,13. The Greek Old Testament uses it as a name for the Garden of Eden, and the garden of (God) 'Allâh. Enc. Br. vol. 17. p. 254".

But in the Qur'ân there is a clear distinction between the Garden of Eden and Paradise since Paradise /Firdaws/ is only mentioned twice, while the mentioning of the gardens of Eden is eleven times. The word/ Jannah= garden, the dual form/ Jannatân/, and the feminine plural form/ Jannât/ about 50 times, some of which refer to earthly gardens.

3. **Eternity in Paradise** is promised only those believers (who in their prayers are submissive, who from idle talk are veering away, who at the giving the Zakâh are performers, and who are of their private parts preservers) "²Al-Muminûn, The Believers- 2-9", among many other religious ordinances.
4. ²Ādam and Eve were commanded not to come near or eat of the Tree, (or else they would be unjust sinners) "²Al-Baqarah, The Cow- 35" But Satan was ready with his devilish delusions, for he spoke to ²Ādam about the Tree as a new discovery indicating that such a tree would guarantee Eternity for ²Ādam and an imperishable kingdom.

Then Satan tried to pursue his evil devices by saying to both ²Ādam and Eve that the parents of humanity have been forbidden to eat of the tree to prevent them from being Angels or from enjoying Eternity. " ²Al- ²A^crâf, The Battlements - 20". Thus Satan insisted that he would always bar ²Ādam and Eve and their children from the Straight Path, and would lie in wait for them in all directions.

To this, ²Allâh gave the Heavenly threat to Satan that (whoever of them will follow you, indeed I shall definitely fill Hell from "among" you all together) "Al-'A^crâf, The Battlements -18".

After all Satan and his tribe can see us whereas we are unable to see them, "Al-'A^c râf, The Battlements - 27".

5. The Tree proved to be the trial of ²Ādam and Eve; and Satan has been ever-ready to misguide both of them and their race. The heinous test was that he insinuated for them to eat of the Forbidden tree. Once they ate of it, their bodily structure changed, and their shameful parts became discernible to them, while these parts had been unseen. Soon they both began (to splice upon themselves some of the leaves of the Garden. And their Lord called out to them, 'Did I not forbid you from that tree, and say to you (both), surely Satan is for you (both) an evident enemy?). They both said, 'Our Lord, we have done an injustice to ourselves; and in case You do not forgive us, indeed we (both) shall definitely be among the losers. So He said, Get down, all of you, some of you an enemy to some others, and in the earth there is for you a repository and an enjoyment for a while). 'Al-A^crâf, The Battlements - 22-24".

But before the Fall, 'Ādam received some Words from his Lord; (so He relented towards him, surely He is The Superbly Relenting, The

Ever-Merciful). But 'Âdam was promised guidance from his Lord, and (in case there should come to you guidance from Me, then whosoever follows My guidance, then no fear shall be on them, nor shall they grieve) "'Al-'A^crâf, The Battlements - 37-38".

6. **Promise of Eternity:** In Eden, 'Âdam stayed for a while enjoying all Divine bliss, he and his wife, until Satan deluded him into disobedience, so he ate of the Tree. The Satanic delusion was inspired by the hope for Eternity' for Satan said to 'Âdam and his wife that the Divine Command to 'Âdam not to eat of the Tree meant that they would be denied Eternity or their becoming angels. "'^oAl'A^crâf, The Battlements - 20".
7. After 'Âdam's repentance to his Lord, and the acceptance by 'Allâh of 'Âdam's repentance, life on earth was in no way guaranteed eternity; for eternity in Eden in the Hereafter has been promised to those who adopt the Divine Law individually and socially. Another type of eternity in torment is preserved for those who disobey the Law. But even in the Hereafter, eternity is available only with the limitation of the existence of the heavens and the earth. For the heavens and the earth can endure in this world, and in the Hereafter, only according to the Will of the Creator. "Hûd, 107 - 108".

III. Âdam's Two Sons

1. Muḥammad (the prayer and peace of 'Allâh be upon him) was told to recite to the believers and non-believers, at his time and to succeeding generations ever after, the story of the two sons of 'Âdam for they both offered sacrifice, and it was graciously accepted of one of them, and not accepted of the other.

One of them said to the other, "I shall kill you" The other said,

'Surely 'Allâh graciously accepts the sacrifice of those who are pious"). 'Al-Mâ'idah, The Table - 27". For the two sons had lived in comfort, one of whom had his flocks of cattle, and the other his flourishing vegetation. The first one offered the best of what he owned, and the second did offer only part of the cheapest stuff.

2. The sign of acceptance was the fire that would eat the sacrifice of the faithful servant, while faithless sacrifices would be left untouched. The killer did not hesitate in carrying out his evil purpose, although the faithful brother tried to dissuade him from remorseless killing by saying to his brother, (in case you stretch your hand to kill me, in no way shall I stretch my hand to kill you'; surely I fear 'Allâh, The Lord of the worlds. Surely I would like that you would incur "upon yourself" my vice and your vice, and so you become one of the inhabitants of the Fire, and that is the recompense of those who are unjust). "'Al-Mâ'idah, The Table - 28-29".
3. After the killing, ('Allâh sent forth a raven searching into the earth to show "the killer" how he should overlay the shameful parts of his brother). Here the killer realized the gravity of his killing his brother, and leaving the dead body bare. So he said to himself, (O woe to me! Am I unable to be like this raven, and so overlay the shameful parts of my brother?) " 'Al Mâ'idah, The Table - 31". So killing a person has been considered one of the gravest sins committed by the children of 'Âdam.
4. The progeny of the killer are still to be found among us, for disbelievers are in no way a minority of the human race, in spite of the fact that a Compact had been taken upon the offspring of 'Âdam to be believers in their Lord, and they bore witness to that. That bearing witness to the Compact is the answer to the pleading of the disbelievers and polytheists who would say in the Hereafter.

(Surely it is only our fathers who associated others with ʔAllâh, and we were their offspring after them). ʔAl-ʔA^crâf, The Battlements - 172".

5. The Compact taken with the offspring of ʔÂdam was that they should believe in the Messengers of ʔAllâh, when they bring to them the ʔâyat (signs=testimonies); for those who are pious shall be rewarded with Bliss in the Gardens of Eden, and the disbelievers would have their punishment in Hell."ʔAl-' ʔA^crâf, The Battlements- 35-36".

IV. Temptation

1. Satan has never been idle, and his devices and his race's evils are multifarious and oftenmost destructive. Such devices delude individuals and nations: on the individual plane they are represented by covetousness and love for wealth and children; and in national interests they take full shape in rivalry and intrigues. That is why the Qur'ân tells us that (temptation is more violent than killing) "Al-Baqarah, The Cow - 191". The only way to avoid such fighting and to achieve a rarely obtainable peace is that all (religion would be dedicated to ʔAllâh) "Al-Baqarah, The Cow- 193".
2. On the individual and family plane, man has always to be reminded that the human self" has been inspired by 'Allâh the ability to discriminate between "good" and "evil: her impiety, and her piety) " ʔAsh-Shams, The Sun- 8".

The distinction between "good" and "evil" is exercised through the human will which is guided by the human intellect(s) 'albâb/ for the achievement of good, and by "Forbiddance (s)"/ nuhâ/ to avoid evil. "Tâhâ- 54-128". The word/ ʔalbâb/indicates those individual human faculties that enable him to adopt reasonable attitudes and

choose good words and deeds, while the word/nûhâ/ advises the self to keep away from evil deeds.

3. The word /nafs/may correspond in English to the word "self, person, or soul, although the word soul may refer sometimes to immaterial essences, as well as to persons, as in "not a soul was in the room".

The word/rûh/ in Arabic means, "Spirit" in English, although there is often in the Arabic dialects the tendency to confuse "Spirit "with "self". In Qur'anic Arabic, the distinction between the two words is most consistently kept, since/nafs/ generally denotes the immaterial essence of man while /rûh/always refers to the angels who abide in heaven, and are sent down to earth to deliver a Divine Revelation to any of the Prophets and Messengers of 'Allâh. In some cases, angels may be sent down to earth for special missions, like the mission of Hârût and Mârût in Babel " ²Al Baqarah, The Cow-102". Another mission of the angels was carrying the coffer in which (there was Serenity from your Lord, and a remnant of what the house of Mûsâ "Moses" and the house of Hârûn "Aaron". left behind, the angels carrying it) " ²Al-Baqarah, the Cow- 248". Another memorable instance is the incident of the angels coming to /Maryam/ Mary, informing her of the birth of /⁶Îsâ/ Jesus, and the breathing in her of His Spirit.

4. The ability for such distinctions between "good "and "evil" is called/ fu²âd/ "perception" which has the two faculties of/ ²albâb/ and/ nuhâ/. Here the Qur'ân so decisively distinguishes between the heart/ qalb/ and/ fu²âd'/: the/ qalb/ is the material organ in the body which throbs with life in the individual being, while/ fu²âd/ is that immaterial essence with which man distinguishes between "good" and "evil". "Here there is constant combination between

"the power of hearing"/ sam^c/, the power of seeing/ baṣar/ and the power of perception/ fu'âd/: (surely hearing and beholding (seeing) and perception; "man" is made responsible for all of those faculties)" 'Al-ʾIsrâʾ, ʾThe Night Journey- 36".

5. Such a distinction between the three important powers of man is often confused in Arabic Muslim literature; for instead of /fuʾâd/, many writers would use "mind" or "heart" or "spirit", while it is clear that the word "mind" was originally used to indicate "memory", for the Latin word/ mens-mentis/ meant memory.

The usage of "mind" for "the power of feeling, perceiving and thinking" is really relatively modern, although it was used in this sense by Muslim scholars like (Averroes) Ibn Rushd and has been in common usage even nowadays.

6. The word "ʿaql" as a noun is nowhere to be found in the Qurʾan, although there is the verb "yaʿqil" in the sense that those who are addressed are warned against committing grave sins, by the fact that they should "refrain, desist = /yaʿqilûn/, since the world in which they live with all its blessings is a Divine gift, but it could be destroyed through their constant disobedience .

Of the many instances in the Qurʾân for the use of [ʿaqala] "to desist, refrain", we have the following ʿâyât "verses". The first is addressed to the disbelievers: (have they not travelled in the earth, so that they have hearts to make them consider and refrain, or ears to hear with?/ 'Al-Hajj, The Pilgrimage- 46". Another/ ʾâyah/ speaks of the stars in heaven (And He has subjected to you the night and the daytime and the sun and the moon. And the stars are subjected to His Command. Surely in that are indeed signs for a people who consider and refrain). "'An-Nahl, The Bee - 12". The third verse

speaks of life and death as well as other 'âyât, (thus 'Allâh gives life to the dead; and shows you His signs, that possibly you would consider and refrain). "Al-Baqarah, The Cow- 73"

7. War/ harb/ is the most destructive form of temptation on the social level. Different human communities compete for domination and worldly gain, and examples of these are found all through human history. But a distinction has to be made here between war and other forms of fighting/ qitâl. / Here we find that the word/ harb/: war is used in the Qur'an in reference to the wars waged by the disbelievers and the hypocrites against Muslims, who began their Mission with the words of peace: (whenever they kindle fire for war, 'Allâh will extinguish it) "'Al-Mâ'idah, The Table- 64".

But in resisting enemy attacks, the Muslims are commanded to fight in defence of the Message, in the following Words (And fight in the way of 'Allâh the ones who fight you, but do not transgress. Surely 'Allâh does not love the transgressors), 'Al-Baqarah, The Cow-190". Thus, in case of aggressive attacks against Muslims, fighting/ qitâl/ is so explicitly decreed.

V. Prophets and Messengers

1. In religious terminology, a Prophet is entrusted with the Divine Grace of calling his people to the Path of 'Allâh; but only some of the Prophets are Messengers leading to belief in 'Allâh through Divine Revelation. Among the Prophets who were not Messengers were the Prophets: Hârûn/ Aaron/ and Yaḥyâ/ John/; but the five Prophets: Nûḥ/ Noah/, ʾIbrâhîm/ Abraham/, Mûsâ/ Moses/, ʿÎsâ/ Jesus/, and Muḥammad were both Prophets and Messengers; so they are called Messengers of Resolve.
2. In mundane matters, a Messenger may be addressed as a Prophet, as

was the case when 'Allâh (Exalted be He) addressed Muḥammad as Prophet about some of his followers, or about other family matters, as in, (O you Prophet, 'Allâh is enough Reckoner for you, and the ones of the believers who closely follow you). "'Al-Ânfal, The Spoils- 64". "Again, we have the Prophet Muḥammad addressed in these words, "O you Prophet, why do you prohibit what 'Allâh has made lawful for you, seeking complete satisfaction on the part of your spouses? And 'Allâh is Ever-Forgiving, Ever-Merciful.) 'At-Taḥrîm, Prohibition - 1".

3. Individual human beings as prophets may be entrusted with the Divine Message, and so they become Messengers with Scriptures. But angels may also be Messengers, as was the case of the angels who came as Messengers to Lûṭ / Lot / after their visit to 'Ib̂rahîm /Abraham/ bringing him the good tidings of the birth of a son. Other angels came to other prophets, and to Maryam/ Mary/ the Angel "The Word" came to inform her of the birth of 'Isâ, and the Angel Jibrîl/ Garbiel/ came with the Qur'ân to Muḥammad as a guidance to him and his people, as well as to humanity as a whole.

So Divine Revelation may come through the Angels or through Prophets, for ('Allâh selects of the Angels Messengers and also of mankind'; surely 'Allâh is Ever-Hearing, Ever-Beholding) "'Al-Hajj, The Pilgrimage- 75".

4. Every Messenger is entrusted with the proclamation of the Message from his Lord; so the Message was revealed to Muḥammad, as well as to all the Messengers before him. Muḥammad (may the prayer and peace of 'Allâh be upon him) was addressed by ²Allâh (Exalted be He) in these Words, (O you Messenger, proclaim whatever has been sent to you from your Lord; and in case you do not perform that, then in no way have you proclaimed His Message;

and 'Allâh safeguards you from mankind. Surely 'Allâh does not guide the disbelieving people) "Al-Mâ'idah, The Table- 67".

5. Messengers are entrusted with the proclamation of the Message, as well as bearing witness about the way their people, believers or disbelievers, received the Message. Outstanding among the Messengers of 'Allâh are 'Ibrâhîm (Abraham) and Muḥammad, who did most fervently endeavor in the proclamation of and striving for their creed in the way of 'Allâh. The similarities between them is so vividly mentioned in the following Words which start with advising the believers to strive fervently for the Message, (And strive for 'Allâh as is the true striving for Him. He is The One Who has selected you, and in no way has He made for you any restrictions in the religion, being the creed of your father 'Ibrâhîm. He is The One Who has named you Muslims in earlier times and in this Book, that the Messenger may be a constant witness about you, and that you may be constant witnesses about mankind) "Al-Ḥajj, The Pilgrimage- 78".

VI. Miracles

A. Nûḥ (Noah)

1. The first Messenger of Resolve was Nûḥ (Noah) who was sent by 'Allâh to his people as an evident warner with the monotheistic Message leading them to the straight Path. Few were his followers but the chiefs of his people started disputing with him. They said (In no way do we see you except a mortal like ourselves, and in no way do we see that anyone has followed you except the ones who are the most decrepit of us, the most inconsiderate. And in no way do we see you have over us any Divine Grace: no indeed, we think you are liars)" Hûd- 27". He asked them why they would say that

when he came to them with the Supreme evidence from his Lord, with a Message of mercy from His Providence, while they are blind to its glorious truth.

2. The cogent defence of Monotheism goes on between Nûh (Noah) and his people, with his declaration that he seeks no reward for proclaiming the Divine Message, for his reward comes from no one except 'Allâh (Exalted be He). In his words, as revealed in the Qur'ân (In no way will I drive away the ones who have believed; surely they shall be meeting their Lord. But I see that you are an ingorant people). "Hûd - 29". He also acknowledges that he does not have knowledge of the Unseen, nor is he an angel. Their dissuading answer was that (You have disputed with us and so made much disputation. Then come up to us with the punishment you promised, in case you are sincere) "Hûd -32". Thus from the very beginning, man has always been the most disputing of all creatures) ²Al-Kahf, The Cave - 54".
3. Then the Divine Command came to Nûh, that he should build the ship under His Eyes, and by His Revelation. While engaged in building the Ship, the chiefs of the disbelievers went on scoffing at him, and he could have no answer for them except that he would eventually scoff at them. Then the Command came, (and the Oven boiled over. We said, Carry therein of every kind two pairs and your family-except for him against whom the Word has gone before -and whosoever has believed). "Hûd - 40".
4. In a message to non-believers, the Qur'ân delivers a warning to the relatives of Messengers and Prophets, in the person of Nûh's son, who was a non-believer. He did not accept his father's call to join him and the believers on board the ship.

His reply to his father's call was, (I will soon have my abode in a mountain, that shall safeguard me from the water). The father's answer was pitifully uttered, (Today there is no safeguarding from the Command of 'Allâh except for him on whom He has mercy'. And the waves interposed between them; so the son was among the drowned) "Hûd - 43".

5. Remorse for his request to save his son from drowning soon came on the part of Nûh, when ³Allâh (Exalted be He) told Nûh that his son was not of his family, since he was a non-believer. In these words, Nûh asked forgiveness from his Lord, (Lord! Surely I take refuge with You that I ask of You that whereof I have no knowledge and unless You forgive me and have mercy on me, I shall be among the losers) "Hûd - 47". Here Divine mercy and blessings were then displayed in the Words of 'Allâh (Exalted be He), (O Nûh, get down in peace from Us, and blessings upon you and upon nations from among the ones with you) "Hûd- 48".
6. The defence of monotheism has been the main concern of Messengers and Prophets. So, after Nûh (Noah), Hûd was entrusted with the same Message of worshipping 'Allâh. But his people (Ād) went on arguing and disputing in defence of their idols, however cogently did Hûd address them, even to the extent that he said (In no way do you have any god other than He'. Decidedly you are nothing except fabricators. O my people, I do not ask of you a reward for it) "Hûd - 50- 51". So, as soon as Divine torment came (We safely delivered Hûd and the ones who believed with him by a mercy from Us) "Hûd - 58".
7. Then Sâlih had also the same Message to his people (Thamûd); and their answer had the same tone of refusal and disputing, for they asked for a tangible (âyah)= sign for the truth of his Message.

Then the sign came in the form of a She-camel from 'Allâh, Who told them that the Camel would drink water for one day, and the next day they would drink of her milk. But eventually they rebelled against that arrangement and they hamstringed the Camel; so as soon as the Shout came, it (took away the ones who did injustice'; so, in the morning, they became cowering bodies in their homes) "Hûd - 67".

Such a punishment was re-iterated by the Prophet Muḥammad to his people on their way to the Battle of Tabûk, as they passed by 'Al-Hijr, where the people of Ṣâliḥ had lived. So the Prophet Muḥammad advised his people not to be so disputing as to ask for a sign similar to that of Thamûd.

B. ʾIbrâhîm (Abraham)

1. ʾIbrâhîm, the Prophet and Messenger, is the second Messenger of Resolve after Nûḥ. Both their names are mentioned by ʾAllâh, Exalted be He, in these Glorious Words, (And indeed We already sent Nûḥ and ʾIbrâhîm, and We have made the Prophethood and the Book in the offsprings of them both) "'Al Ḥadîd, Iron - 26". In fact, ʾIbrâhîm occupies such a prominent position among Prophets and Messengers that he is called the unswervingly upright Muslim, (and ʾAllâh took to Himself ʾIbrâhîm for a(close) fellow [khalîlan]). 'An-Nisâ³, Women- 25"
2. That highly prominent position occupied by ʾIbrâhîm did not convince his father of following the straight Path of ʾIbrâhîm. So, when ʾIbrâhîm spoke to his father 'Âzar in reproach, (Do you take to yourself idols for gods? Surely I see you and your people in evident error) "'Al-'An'âm, Cattle - 74". Thus the father was adamant

in his disbelief, and 'Ibrâhîm never hesitated to declare his innocence from idol worship, saying, (Surely I am completely quit of whatever you worship) "'Az-Zukhruf, Decoration - 25".

3. Such a fight against idols made ²Ibrâhîm try to convince his people of the falseness of their idols by asking them, (What are these statues to which you are consecrating yourselves?) "Al 'Anbiyâ², The Prophets - 52". They answered that they found their fathers worshipping them. To this he answered that 'Allâh is The Lord of the heavens and the earth. This was followed by his actual destruction of their idols, except one big idol, which he left as a reminder to his people. So the punishment was ready, for the disbelievers said, (Burn him away and vindicate your gods) "'Al-'Anbiyâ², The Prophets - 68". But Divine Grace from 'Allâh soon came, ("O fire, be coolness and peace upon 'Ibrâhîm) "'Al-Anbiyâ², The Prophets-69".

Disputing on the part of non-believers is a perennial trait. So here again, we see ²Ibrâhîm answering the disputing king, (My Lord is He Who gives life, and makes to die). So the king says, "I give life and make to die". Here the response of 'Ibrâhîm was confounding to the disbelieving king (Surely 'Allâh comes up with the sun from the East, so do come up with it from the West. Then the one who disbelieved was confounded; and 'Allâh does not guide the unjust people) "'Al-Baqarah, The Cow- 258".

5. In his search for the Truth, ²Ibrâhîm was inspired to look at the universe around him' so (as soon as the night outspread over him, he saw a planet and said, "This is my lord", Then as soon as it waned, he said, I do not love waning things. Then as soon as he saw the moon emerging he said, "This is my lord" yet , as soon as

it waned, he said, 'Indeed, unless my Lord guides me, indeed I shall definitely be of the erring people. Then, as soon as he saw the sun emerging he said, "This is my lord" this is greater'. yet, as soon as it waned, he said, 'O my people, surely I am quit of whatever you associate (with 'Allâh). Surely I have directed my face to Him Who originated the heavens and earth, being unswervingly upright; and in no way am I one of the associators". "Al-'An^câm, Cattle- 76-79".

6. Again, ²Ibrâhâm was in search for more certitude; so he asked his Lord to show him how He gave life and death. Then he was reprimanded (And have you not believed? ²I brâhîm said, ˆYes indeed, but that my heart be composed) "Al-Baqarah, The Cow- 260".

So he was commanded to take four birds, then wring them to himself and put a portion of them on four mountains. Thereafter he should call them, and rightly they would come back to him with hasty diligence. These words and his fulfilment of the command assured his certitude in 'Allâh, The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Wise.

7. In his old age, ²Ibrâhîm received the Messengers of the Lord with the good tidings to his wife of the birth of their son, Ishâq (Isaac). The Angel Messengers were offered a (fleshy well-roasted calf) but they declined, since their angelic nature could not partake of human food or drink. Besides, they were commanded to go to Prophet Lût (Lot). But ²Ibrâhîm's wife was surprised at the good tidings, and said, (O woe to me! Shall I beget and I am an old woman, and my husband is an aged man? Surely, this is indeed a wonderful thing) "Hûd - 72".

Yet there came the Divine Answer (on the part of the Angels, (Do you wonder at the Command of 'Allâh? The mercy of 'Allâh and His blessings be upon you, O population of the Family. Surely, ²Allâh is Ever-Praiseworthy, Ever-Glorious) "Hûd- 73".

8. Lût (Lot) was a relative of ʾIbrâhîm; and on their way to Lût, the Angel Messengers went to ʾIbrâhîm with the good tidings of the birth of ʾIshâq; but ʾIbrâhîm was worried about Lût and his people. So he tried to argue with the Messengers, being afraid of Divine punishment for them. Such arguing or disputing was an evidence of ʾIbrâhîm's ignorance of the grievous sins committed by some of the people of Lût but he received this Divine Address, (O ʾIbrâhîm, veer away from this. Surely your Lord's Command has already come' and surely there is coming to them a torment not to be turned back) "Hûd- 76".

9. After Divine saving from the fire, ʾIbrâhîm saw in his dream, that he would slay his son ʾIsmâʿîl. So he told ʾIsmâʿîl (O my son, I see in a dream that I shall slay you, so, look, what do you think? He said, O my father, perform whatsoever you are commanded; you shall find me, 'Allâh willing, among the patient ones'). "As-Sâffât, The Rangers- 102".

When ʾIsmâʿîl was (dashed upon his brow) on the ground by his father, ʾIbrâhîm was soon called out by 'Allâh (you have readily sincerely fulfilled the vision; thus We recompense the fair-doers. Surely this indeed is the evident trial. And We ransomed him (Ismâʿîl) with a magnificent slain sacrifice) 'As-Sâffât, The Rangers- 103-107".

10. In memory of this glorious incident, Muslims nowadays are called upon to ransom on this occasion during the Feast of Sacrifice, when every able person is expected to slay a sheep which is to be divided in three portions; one third to the neighboring poor and needy, another third to relatives, and the remaining third to be for the person's family use. The shedding of blood in memory of ʾIbrâhîm and ʾIsmâʿîl, should have been adopted by all the triple

family of ʿIbrâhîm, since he is the forefather of the long line of his descendants, ending with Muḥammad (Prayer and peace of 'Allâh be upon them all.) Probably the shedding of the blood of cattle on such an occasion would have alleviated the desire for revenge and wars on the part of humanity as a whole, especially during the last two centuries of man's known history.

- 11- The ritual of shedding animal blood on that occasion by all able Muslims, points to the need on the part of humanity as a whole to come to the realization that obedience to 'Allâh, and subservience to His Will, could bring all of us the realization that the ransom granted ʿIsmâʿîl was a symbol for salvation and global peace. No human gathering could equal that glorious gathering on Mount ʿArafât, with millions of Muslims every year in response to the call by ʿIbrâhîm to all humanity to perform the pilgrimage, (and come up hurriedly.. on foot and upon every slender conveyance. that they may witness things profitable to them and remember the Name of ʿAllâh on days well-known over such brute cattle as He has provided them. So eat thereof, and feed the miserable poor. Thereafter let them make an end of their unkemptness, and let them fulfill their vows, and let them circumambulate around the Ancient House)" "ʿAl-Ḥajj, The Pilgrimage -27-29". With circumambulation, there is, of course, bowing and prostration in prayer to 'Allâh on that momentous occasion to which men go on foot or any (ḍâmir) "slender conveyance", probably anticipating any kind of means of communication evolving from the time of camels and horses to modern and future means of transportation.
12. The Prophet 'Ibrâhîm (the prayer and peace of ;'Allâh be upon him) has a special place in the hearts of all Muslims, since his complete surrender to the Will of 'Allâh has been unequalled from his

readiness to sacrifice his son up to the building of the House. So it is not only the ritual of the pilgrimage that is an annual reminder of his glorious submission, but the name of no other Prophet or Messenger is to be mentioned in a Muslim's daily prayers except the name of 'Ibrâhîm. His name is coupled with the name of Muḥammad (the prayer and peace of 'Allâh be upon them both). Any two raka^ċât (bowings and prostrations) cannot be complete without mention of both their names, besides the frequent mention of the name of ٱIbrâhîm during recitations from the Qur'ân, whether during prayers or habitual reading any time by day or night.

13. Not only disputes, but also plotting and treachery have their place in the history of humanity. One of such treacherous incidents can be seen vividly in the story of the Prophet Yûsuf (Joseph). So we are told, in the most Glorious Narrative, that Yûsuf said to his father Ya^ċqûb (Jacob), (O my father, surely I saw "in a dream" eleven planets and the sun and the moon; I saw them prostrating to me. Since the father knew the interpretation of the dream, he advised his son not to narrate his vision to his brothers, for (they may plot against you some serious plotting. Surely Satan is to man an evident enemy). Yûsuf, Joseph - 4-5". Such envious plotting actually took place when the eleven brothers determined to get rid of Yûsuf, either by killing him or casting him in a pit. Finally, casting him in the pit proved to the brothers more merciful, and that proved the vindication of the Divine promise to Yûsuf, (And thus your Lord will select you, and teach you, some of the interpretations of discourses, and perfect His favor upon you, and upon the house of Ya^ċqûb (Job), as He perfected it aforetime upon your two fathers, ٱIbrâhîm (Abraham) and ٱIshâq (Isaac)". Surely your Lord is Ever-Knowing, Ever-Wise) "Yûsuf, Joseph - 6".

But the brothers of Yûsuf did falsely accuse him of lying, at which accusation, Yûsuf declared his identity to them, and asked them to take his shirt and cast it on his father's face. That shirt made his father recover his sight after (his eyes had whitened with grief) "Yûsuf, Joseph - 84"

C. Mûsâ (Moses)

1. With all his disputes with the heretic king, with all his earnest search for truth, with all his desire to see the Divine Will in life after death, ²Ibrâhîm showed submissive obedience when he saw in his dream that he was commanded to kill his son ²Ismâ^cîl.

Mûsâ had similar incidents, for, in his early years, he was faced with two men fighting, one of his people and the other of his enemy. (Then, the one of his sect asked him for succour against him who was of his enemy' so Mûsâ transfixing him, and so made an end of him)" 'Al-Qaşaş - 15". Later Mûsâ realized that what he did was of Satan's delusion' and he asked forgiveness from 'Allâh for this sin. After he was granted forgiveness, for ²Allâh is The Ever-Forgiving, The Ever Merciful, he left for Madyan and lived with Shu^cayb for a number of years.

2. Before being entrusted with the Divine Message, Mûsâ had an enlightening experience with the Prophet 'Al-Khidr to whom 'Allâh (had brought mercy, and had taught knowledge from very close to Us)," Al-Kahf, The Cave - 65". To him Mûsâ said, (Shall I follow you on condition that you teach me of what you have been rightly taught?) The Prophet answered (Surely you will never be able to endure with me patiently) "Al-Kahf -66- 67". Finally, Mûsâ agreed to accompany ²Al-Khidr, who stipulated that Mûsâ should not ask any questions about the deeds of the Prophet, except when

he decides to inform Mûsâ about them. First, the Prophet caused a hole in the ship. Then he killed a young man, and finally he rebuilt a fallen wall. Mûsâ kept asking for explanations of such feats, and was told that the hole in the ship was intended to save the passengers from the hands of a despot. The killing of the young man was to save his parents from his arrogance and disbelief; and the rebuilding of the wall came to give the two orphans who owned it the chance to get the treasure that was underneath it. At last the Prophet avowed to Mûsâ that what he did was not of his own thinking, but it was a Command from 'Allâh.

3. On his way back to Egypt, he was entrusted with the Divine Message from 'Allâh, and was granted 9 glorious signs ^٢âyât', one of which was the change of his staff into a serpent that looked like a jinni. The second was the turning of his hand into superhuman brightness; and with these two proofs, he was commanded to go to Fir^cawn "Pharaoh" in Egypt to deliver the Divine Message of monotheism. Before the dispute with the king of Egypt, Mûsâ asked his Lord saying, "Lord! Expand my breast; And ease for me my fulfillment of Your Command; and loosen a knot from my tongue, that they may comprehend my saying. (And make for me a counsellor of my family; Hârûn, my brother) "Tâhâ - 25-30". So Mûsâ was granted his request; and he and his brother were commanded to speak to Fir^cawn leniently (that possibly he would remind himself or would be apprehensive). "Tâhâ - 44". They spoke to Fir^cawn asking him not to torment the Children of ^٢Isrâ^٢îl, and to send all the Children with Mûsâ and Hârûn. The expected refusal by Fir^cawn was followed by the Divine Signs of the Lord presented by Mûsâ; and in response to these Signs, Fir^cawn decided to

show both Prophets the feats of his sorcerers. When such feats failed, their serpents were gulped by Mûsâ's staff.

4. Such ominous disputes between Mûsâ and Fir^cawn ended in the drowning of Fir^cawn and his people. But other disputes arose between Mûsâ and his people. One of these took place when Mûsâ said to his people ('Surely 'Allâh commands you to slay a cow') "Al-Baqarah, The Cow- 67". Their response was to ask Mûsâ to give a more detailed description of the cow; and the description was given as (neither too old, nor a virgin, a middling between the two) "Al-Baqarah- 68". More information was till necessary; so the color of the cow was given (surely it is a yellow cow, bright in color and pleasant to onlookers)" 'Al-Baqarah - 69". Still, the disputers were unconvinced, and the final answer was that it was that (surely it is not tractable to stir the earth or to water the tillage, unimpaired, with no blemish on it) 'Al-Baqarah - 71".
5. When the appointment for the Tablets was decided, Mûsâ went to hear the Message from his Lord. Being so keen to get the Message, Mûsâ said, (Lord! Show me, that I may look at You .. you shall never see Me, but look at the mountain; so, in case it stands still in its place, then you shall eventually see Me? Then, as soon as his Lord manifested Himself to the mountain, He made it pounded 'into dust'; and Mûsâ collapsed stunned. Then, as soon as he recovered, he said, 'All Extolment be to You! I repent to You; and I am the first of the believers) " 'Al-'A^crâf, The Battlements- 143".
6. These Glorious Words were not the only ones that Mûsâ received from his Lord, for (to Mûsâ Allâh spoke long, eloquent speech), 'An-Nisâ², Women, 164. But, even after receiving the Tablets, Mûsâ was faced with the outrageous deed of his people, when they (took to themselves even after him, of their diverse ornaments

a corporeal Calf that had a (lowing voice'). "'Al-'A^crâf, The Battlements- 148". Thus, when Mûsâ returned from the Appointment, and saw the heresy that his people had fallen into, he was angry (And cast down the Tablets, and took hold of his brother's head, dragging him to himself). Then his brother addressed him, ('Son of my mother, surely the people deemed me weak, and were almost about to kill me. So do not make the enemies to gloat over me, and do not make me among the unjust people) "'Al-'A^crâf, The Battlements, 149, 150". Finally, Mûsâ asked for forgiveness, for himself and his brother, from his Lord, and took up the Tablets which had guidance and mercy from the Lord.

7. Other disputes with Mûsâ on the part of some of his followers include their outrageous desire that Mûsâ should (show 'Allâh openly to them) "'An- Nisâ², Women -153" Then the stunning thunderbolt took them for their atheistic ignorance. Another instance of dispute and immorality took place when 'Allâh (raised above them the Tûr, taking compact with them, and We said to them, 'Do not be aggressors on the Sabbath; and We took from them a solemn compact. So, for their breaking of their compact, and their disbelieving in the signs of 'Allâh, and their killing of the Prophets untruthfully...) "'An-Nisâ², Women-154-155" for all of this, they were overcome by Divine punishment.
8. One of the disputes arose between Qârûn (Korah) and the believing followers of Mûsâ. Qârûn was endowed with such hoardings (that the keys of them would indeed overburden a band of men endowed with power) "Al-Qaṣaṣ, The Narrative - 76". When his people advised him to do justice, and veer away from disbelief and corruption, his answer was, (Surely what has been brought to me is only for a knowledge that I possess). 'Al-Qaṣaṣ, The Narrative - 78".

So, when he went out to his people in his full outward glory, some of them exclaimed, (O, would that we have the like of what Qârûn has been brought. Surely he is indeed an owner of a tremendous fortune. Here the believers answered, (Woe to you. The requital from 'Allâh is more charitable for him who believes and does righteousness). "Al-Qasas, The Narrative - 79- 80"

Soon Divine punishment came, and he and his palace were instantly destroyed; and then his admirers realized that such a destiny would have befallen them, had it not been for mercy and forgiveness from 'Allâh.

9. However, with all such disputes, Divine Blessings on Mûsâ and his people were many, one of which was telling him to (strike with your staff the stone! 'So there squirt from it twelve springs; every folk already knew their drinking- place. And We overshadowed them with mists, and We sent down manna and quails upon them).

With all these blessings many of Mûsâ's followers kept on corrupting in the earth; (and in no way did they do injustice to Us, but to themselves they were doing injustice). " 'Al-'A^crâf, The Battlements - 160".

10. Again, disobedience seemed to have been a constant trait of some of the followers of Mûsâ and their descendants; for we are told again that, dissatisfied with manna and quails, some of them asked (of what the earth grows- of its green herbs and its cucumbers, and its corn, and its lentils, and its onions) "Al-Baqarah, The Cow- 61". The penalty for those disbelievers was humiliation, indigence and anger of 'Allâh.

Similarly, those who lived in (the town bordering the sea were aggressors on the Sabbath, and their whales came to them on the day

of their Sabbath with their heads up, and on the day they did not keep Sabbath, they did not come up to them) " 'Al-'A^crâf, The Battlements - 163". Those met the miserable fate of becoming (apes, miserably spurned) " 'Al-Baqarah, The Cow- 65".

D. ʿĪsâ (Jesus)

1. Mûsâ was the third of the Messengers of Resolve, after Nûh and 'Ibrâhîm; but the history of the modern world can be more easily traced only after ʿĪsâ (Jesus). Before Christianity, we are told that dominion over the then known world was in the hands of Persians and Romans; and the wars between them at one stage resulted in the fall of Greece into the hands of the Persian king in 387 BC. Then Alexander, the Macedonian, conquered Persia in 33 B.C; and in the previous year (332 B.C.) Alexander conquered Egypt.
2. ʿĪsâ, the fourth Messenger of Resolve, was entrusted with the same Divine Message of Monotheism as the brother Messengers who preceded him. But his birth was a special Divine gift, only similar to the birth of 'Âdam, whose existence came from dust, and who lived in Eden for a while. After molding 'Âdam, 'Allâh (breathed into him of His Spirit), "As-Sajdah, Prostration- 9". Christ did not live in Eden, for he was born on this earth, after the Angel breathed into Maryam (of Our Spirit and made her and her son a sign "câyah" to the worlds) "'Al-Anbiyâ", The Prophets- 91".
3. All of his short life, ʿĪsâ was also proclaiming the Message he received from 'Allâh, contained in the ʾInjîl (Gospel).

The Ihjîl "Gospel", Tawrâh (Torah), and the Qur'ân, all three Divine Scriptures, are the only books of Monotheism that humanity is now entrusted to abide by, although strict monotheism that is unequivocally proclaimed in the Qur'ân is not observed by

the followers of the two earlier Books. That is why Muḥammad was addressed by his Lord, 'Allâh, (And We have sent down to you the Book with the Truth, sincerely verifying whatever of the Books that were before it, and having Supreme hegemony over them). "Al-Mâ'idah, The Table- 48".

4. The Judaic tradition was upheld only by a minority of the world before the coming of Jesus, for both Rome and Persia lived under polytheism. Even in Egypt, polytheism was rampant to the extent that the Pharaohs held absolute power and even claimed divinity, ever since the time of Mûsâ (Moses). At that time, the Pharaoh addressed his people, ("O my people, is not the kingdom of Miṣr "Egypt" mine, and are not these rivers running from beneath me?) "Az-Zukhruf, Decoration- 51". He also proclaimed that he was the only god of his people, ("O you chiefs, in no way do I know that you have a god other than me. So kindle for me a fire, O Hâmân, upon the clay, then make for me a tower, that possibly I would view the god of Mûsâ; and surely I indeed expect that he is one of the liars) " 'Al-Qasas, The Narrative- 38".
5. ʿĪsâ (Jesus), the son of Mariam (Mary) was entrusted with the Divine Message, and was given (Supreme evidences; and aided with the Spirit of Holiness) " 'Âl-Baqarah, The Cow- 253". Thus the Angels said to Maryam (Mary) (surely 'Allâh has elected you and purified you, and has elected you over the women of the worlds) "'Al-ʿImrân, The House of ʿImrân- 42". So Maryam was given the good tidings of the birth of ʿĪsâ who, (shall speak to mankind in the cradle, and in maturity, and shall be one of the righteous) and who will also come to his people with the signs from his Lord (that I create for you out of clay as the semblance of a bird, then I blow into it, so it is a bird by the permission of 'Allâh, and I heal him

who was born blind, and the leper, and give life to the dead by the permission of 'Allâh, and I fully inform you of the things you eat, and what you store in your homes) "'Âl-[°]Imrân, The House of [°]Imrân- 49".

6. In spite of all these Divine signs [°](âyât), there came the time when the Disciples asked [°]Îsâ (is your Lord able to send down upon us a Table from the heaven? 'He said, 'Be pious to 'Allâh, in case you are believers'). "[°]Al-Mâ[°]idah, The Table- 112". They also said that they wanted to eat of it and to have their hearts composed; and they would bear witness for the truth of his Message. Here [°]Îsâ asked his Lord saying ('Our Lord, send down upon us a Table from the heaven, that shall be to us a festival, for the first of us and the last and a sign from You). In answer to such a request, the Words from the Lord came (Surely I am sending it down upon you "all;" so, whosoever of you hereafter disbelieves, then surely I shall torment him with a torment wherewith I do not torment anyone of the worlds) "[°]Al-Mâ[°]idah, The Table- 114-115".
7. With all the Divine boons and blessings given to [°]Îsâ and his sincere followers, many began to ascribe divinity to [°]Îsâ; and thus he was addressed by his Lord, (And as 'Allâh said, "O [°]Îsâ, son of Maryam, did you say to mankind, 'Take me to yourselves and my mother as two gods, apart from 'Allâh? [°]([°]Isa) said, 'All Extolment be to You. In no way is it for me to say what I have no right to. In case I ever said it, then You already know it. You know whatsoever is within myself, and I do not know what is within Your Self.. You, Ever-You, are The Superb Knower of the Things Unseen. In no way did I say to them anything except whatever You commanded

me 'saying' 'Worship 'Allâh, my Lord and your Lord; and I was a witness over them, as long as I was among them; then as soon as You took me up, You, Ever-You, have been The Watcher over them, and You are Ever-Witnessing over everything. In case You torment them, then surely they are Your bondmen; and in case You forgive them, then surely, You, Ever-You, are The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Wise") " 'Al-Mâ'idah, The Table- 116-118".

8. As he was entrusted with the Divine Revelation, his Lord sent him as a Messenger to the Seeds of ʾIsrâʾîl (Israel) sincerely verifying what was before him of the Tawrâh, and to make lawful some of that which was prohibited to you. The Disciples said, (Our Lord, we have believed in what You have sent down, and we have closely followed the Messenger, so write us down with the ones who bear witness) "ʾÂl-ʿImrân- 50-53".

But with the believers in the minority, the Seeds of ʾIsrâʾîl were largely disbelievers. Some of these disbelievers even claim that they killed ʿĪsâ (the Messiah, son of Maryam, the Messenger of 'Allâh; but in no way did they kill him; and in no way did they crucify him; but a likeness of him was presented to them. And surely the ones who differed about him are indeed in doubt about that. In no way do they have any knowledge about him, except a close following of surmise, and certainly in no way did they kill him) 'An-Nisâ', Women- 157".

9. Among his followers who proclaimed belief in 'Allâh, and in ʿĪsâ as a Messenger, some deviated from the right path, and innovated monasticism which began with strict observance of their religious creed, but (in no way did We prescribe it for them except for seeking the All-Blessed Satisfaction of 'Allâh; yet in no way did they

pay heed to it as it should be truly heeded". So We brought the ones of them who believed their reward; and many of them are immoral) " 'Al-Hadîd, Iron- 27". This type of immorality is usually interpreted as hypocrisy, for both hypocrisy and immorality are generally understood as synonymous for, (surely the hypocrites are they who are the immoral ones) "At-Tawbah, Repentance- 67".

10. Then, when ^عÎsâ found out that disbelief was rampant, he asked his followers (Who are my vindicators to 'Allâh? The Discipks said; We are the vindicators to ^عAllâh We believe in 'Allâh, and we bear witness that we are Muslims), " 'Al-^عImrân- 52".

So the followers of the Call, by the three Messengers to 'Allâh, must always be topmost by Divine Decree. (I am making the ones who have closely followed you above the ones who have disbelieved until the Day of Resurrection. Thereafter to Me will be your return; so I will judge between you as to whatever you used to differ) "^عAl-^عImrân- 55" These are the Words addressed to ^عÎsâ but they do comprehend all the followers of the three Revealed Religions.

Finally ^عÎsâ was raised to Him, as a purification from the evils of the disbelievers, who claimed that they killed and crucified him. The raising of ^عÎsâ represents the return of the breath of the Spirit who blew it into Mariam to its angelic realm again. This truth, distorted by the majority of Christians and Jews nowadays, is confirmed by these Words, (And decidedly there is not one of the Population of the Book but will indeed definitely believe in him (^عÎsâ) before (the disbeliever's) death, and on the Day of Resurrection he (^عÎsâ) will be a witness against them) " 'An-Nisâ^ع ,Women- 159".

E. Muḥammad:

1. It seems convenient to divide the history of humanity into three different periods, the first beginning with 'Ādam up to Hūd and Ṣāliḥ; the second deals with the history of 'Ibrāhīm and Mūsā and the third tells the history of ʿĪsā (Jesus) and Muḥammad.

Muḥammad was born after ʿĪsā by about 570 years; that is why ʿĪsā said to his followers that he was the bearer of (good tidings of a Messenger who shall come up directly after me whose name is ('Aḥmad) Muḥammad) " 'Aṣ-Ṣaff, The Ranks- 6".

2. Muḥammad (the prayer and peace of 'Allāh be upon him) was born on Monday, Rabīʿ al-Awwal in the year of the Elephant. His father had gone to Syria for trade, and on his way, he was taken ill and died in Yatbrib " 'Al-Madīnah; so the Prophet was born an orphan. After his birth, his mother entrusted him to a foster-mother till the age of six. Then on the return journey, his mother fell ill and was buried at 'Al-Abwāʿ, not far away from Yathrib. So his grandfather took great care of him; and after the grandfather's death, he was entrusted to his uncle, 'Abū Tālib.
3. Christians in Syria were not, on the whole, hostile to the Prophet and ʿIslām. An incident indicating an expectation of the last Messenger is told after Baḥīra, a Syrian monk, who saw Muḥammad with his uncle as both went there in a merchant caravan. The monk was surprised to find traces of the Prophet's description in the Christian books. He drew near to the young man and began to ask him several questions ⁽¹⁾.

(1) Muḥammad and the First Muslim State, p. 160.

Bahîra: Young man, by 'Al-^cUzzâ and 'Allât, would you answer my questions?

The Prophet: Do not ask me by ³Al-^cUzzâ and 'Allât, for by 'Allâh, nothing is more hateful to me than these two.

Bahîra: Then by 'Allâh, tell me what I ask.

The Prophet: Ask me what you like.

Bahîra: Do you like solitude?

The Prophet: Yes!

Bahîra: Do you like contemplating the sky and the stars?

The Prophet: Yes!

Bahîra: Do you like playing with your mates?

The Prophet: No!

Bahîra: Do you see in your sleep visions that come true when you wake up?

The Prophet: Yes!

Bahîra: (to ²Abû Tâlib). O ²Abû Tâlib! O ²Abû Tâlib!

²Abû Tâlib: (looking surprised): What is the matter, Bahîra?

Bahîra: (pointing to the Prophet): Tell me, what is this boy to you?

²Abû Tâlib: He is my son.

Bahîra: He is not your son. The father of this boy cannot be alive.

²Abû Tâlib: He is my brother's son.

Bahîra: What has become of his father?

²Abû Tâlib: He died when his mother was pregnant.

Bahîra: (to himself): You are right. (Aloud) Go back with your brother's son to his country and guard him carefully against the Jews, for, by 'Allâh, if they see him and know about him what I know, they will contrive evil against him. Great things are in store for your brother's son.

ؓ**Abû Tâlib:** (amazed): Great things are in store for him! for this my brother's son?

Bahîra : Yes, surely his face is the face of a Prophet, and his eye is the eye of a Prophet!

ؓ**Abû Tâlib:** A Prophet! What is a Prophet?

Bahîra: A Prophet receives Revelation from Heaven and proclaims it to the people of the earth ⁽¹⁾.

Naturally enough, the majority of the Makkan polytheists including the Prophet's uncle, took a hostile attitude against the Prophet and his Divine Message.

3. The Christians were not an influential community either in Makkah or Al-Madînah. The Jews were more formidable in Al- Madînah, and before the change of Qiblah, they had thought that they could win the Prophet over to their religion. So to them came the answer that the Qur'ân has the Truth that they have distorted sometimes and concealed at others in their long history of disobedience and rebellion ⁽²⁾.

Thus the Jewish tribes in Madînah began to conspire with Quraysh in Makkah for an atrocious attack on Muḥammad and the Muslims

(1) Adapted from Tawfîq Al- Ḥakîm's "Muḥammad".

(2) The Prophet Muḥammad and the First Muslim State, p. 31. by M.M. Ghàli.

in Madīnah. Although the concerted attack failed, the Jewish tribe of Banī Quraythah had to be punished for their treachery, as seen from these Words (And He 'Allāh' brought down those of the Scripture people who backed them: (the polytheists of Quraysh) from their stronghold, and He cast terror in their hearts': some you killed and some you captured) " 'Al-Aḥzâb, The Allied Parties- 26".

4. Open hostility to the Prophet and Muslims in Madīnah was one aspect of Jewish hatred to the new state and its dwellers. But another more dangerous attitude was taken by Jewish hypocrites. So one of these Jewish hypocrites, called ʾIbn ʾUbayy welcomed the Prophet when he first came to ʾAl-Madīnah; and out of courtesy, ʾIbn ʾUbayy used to stand before the Prophet gave his Friday sermon and to urge the people of ʾAl-Madīnah to follow the Prophet, and fight his enemies with him. But after the decisive battles of the Prophet, he began to show his disaffection and sedition; and for this, he has been called the head of the hypocrites.
5. Such hostile attitudes on the part of the Jews, through hypocrisy or open hostility, explain why the Prophet, through Divine Revelation, had decided on first entering ʾAl-Madīnah, to make a treaty with the Jews. It was a covenant of mutual obligation, in which the Jews were given equal status with Muslims. In time of peace, both Muslims and Jews were to redress the wrong incurred on Jews or Muslims. In case of war against the disbelievers, neither Jews nor Muslims should make a separate treaty with disbelievers., For peace is indivisible, "Peace to the believers is one. All differences of opinion were to be referred to 'Allāh and His Prophet. "If Quraysh were to attack ʾAl-Madīnah, Jews and Muslims have to defend the city".

Chapter Two

I. Judaism

1. The word Jew is derived from the name of Judas (Yehudhah) "Yahûd," the fourth son of Jacob "ya^cqûb," whose tribe, together with that of his half-brother Benjamin "Binyâmin", constituted the kingdom of Judah, as opposed to that of the remaining tribes (Israel) Isrâ³îl", "Enc. Bri vol. 13 p. 42". In the early days, the Israelis lived in the northern half of Palestine, and the Judas in the south, until Moses "Mûsâ," was entrusted with Divine Revelation, and took "Hârûn "(Aaron) as Minister, (And indeed We already brought Mûsâ (Moses) the Book, and We made with him his brother "Hârûn (Aaron) as minister) "'Al-Furqân, The Criterion-35".
2. In 561 B.C. the captive Judean king was received cordially by Nebuchadrezzar's son, and under Darius, the Temple was rebuilt, and it took four years to complete it in 516. B.C.

But the country was still under Persian domination. Then came the period of contact with Greek culture, during which age, after many misfortunes, the Jews saw a revival; "and their religion and patriotism "neither misfortune could kill nor prosperity corrupt". Enc. Br. vol.13, p. 51". The same cordial relations existed between the Jews and Alexander, and it is a noteworthy fact "that great conquerors, Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon, have cordially treated the Jews".

3. Ever since the time of Mûsâ and Hârûn, Jewish history has been full of numerous incidents of disobedience and disbelief, as has been presented earlier here. That explains their history of dispersal and

persecution. Even when the time came, and Christ " 'Al-Masîḥ" proclaimed his Message to them and to the whole world, arrogance and disobedience were their answer to the Divine Revelation expressed in the "Injîl" Gospel, which testifies to the truth of the "Tawrâh" Torah, their Book, revealed to "Mûsâ" Moses.

4. Most of the incidents of dispute and disobedience are related, sometimes in detail, in the Qur'ân when referring to the Message of Mûsâ, (Surely this Qur'ân narrates to the Seeds of Isrâ'îl most of that concerning which they differ), "An-Naml, The Ant, 76". Such instances are the disputes about the "Cow", their disobedience as regards the Sabbath, and their insistence on trying to see ('Allâh openly, so the stunning thunderbolt took you while you were looking on). "Al-Baqarah, The Cow- 55".
5. When 'Îsâ "Jesus" came with the Supreme evidences, (he said, 'I have readily come to you with (the) 'Wisdom, and that I may make evident to you some of that concerning which you differ; so be pious and obey me) "Az-Zukhruf, Decoration- 63". Thereon differences arose among the various parties; and finally they plotted to kill Jesus. Such a heinous crime could never be fulfilled, and Jesus was saved through Divine mercy.
6. The penalty for such disobedience and plotting was the Divine promise that the true followers of Christ will be dominant over Jews till the Day of Resurrection. The disbelievers will be severely tormented (in the present life and the Hereafter; and in no way shall they have any vindicators. And as for the ones who have believed and done deeds of righteousness, then He will pay them their rewards in full; and 'Allâh does not love the unjust ones). 'Âl 'Imrân, The House of 'Imrân- 56-57".

7. Finally, the final gathering of the Seeds of 'Isrâ^٢îl is explicitly stated when 'Allâh said, after the drowning of Fir^cawn and his people, "Dwell in the land; then when the promise of the Hereafter comes, We shall cause you to come " 'Al-'Isrâ^٢,^٢ The Night Journey- 104". That Divine promise is now taking effect by the establishment of ^٢Isrâ^٢îl in Palestine again, but Divine punishment is still forthcoming, in case they go to disobedience and corruption. (It may be that your Lord will have mercy on you; and in case you go back "to corruption", We shall go back; and We have made Hell a place for "severe" detention to the disbelievers "'Al-^٢Isrâ^٢,^٢ The Night Journey- 8".

II. Christianity

1. The ancestry of Jesus Christ is traced to the family of David, and his birth is ascribed to the miraculous act of (God) 'Allâh. At the age of 30, he appeared in public, continuing the proclamation of the Message of worshipping in the way that all previous Messengers had done; and he went on with his call for 18 months, or till he was 33, when he was raised up to (his God) 'Allâh: (in no way did they "the disbelievers" crucify him, but a likeness of him was presented to them. And surely the ones who differed about him are indeed in doubt about that. In no way do they have any knowledge about him, except the close following of surmise, and certainly in no way did they kill him. No indeed, 'Allâh raised him up to Him; and 'Allâh has been Ever-Mighty. Ever-Wise). "^٢An-Nisâ,^٢ Women- 157- 158".

2. Christmas was not among the earliest festivals of the Church, and before the 5th century after the birth of Jesus, there was no consensus of opinion as to when it should come in the calendar. The Gauls are said to have celebrated his birth on Wednesday, December 25, in the 42nd year of Augustus; and they believed that the resurrection is supposed to be on March 25. Other historians mention that he was born on Friday, December 25, the 15th day of the new moon- though, in fact, December 25 after his birth was a Sunday "Enc. Brit. vol. 5. p. 642".

In Britain, December 25 was a festival long before the conversion to Christianity and as late as 353 in Rome, the birth Feast was celebrated in the West on January 7, the same adopted by the Copts in Egypt.

3. The unusual birth of Jesus, as well as his miraculous deeds have driven many Jews to deny that his birth was through the Divine Word to his mother; but they have also driven many of his followers to ascribe divinity to his person. The truth about all of this has been revealed in these Words, (Surely the likeness of ^ĉĪsâ in the Providence of 'Allâh is as the likeness of 'Âdam. He " 'Allâh" created him of dust, thereafter He said to him, Be: and so he is... Surely this is indeed the true narrative, and in no way is there any god except 'Allâh; and surely 'Allâh indeed, Ever He, is The Ever-Mighty, The Ever-Wise) ^٣"Âl-^ĉImrân- 59-62". The only difference between 'Âdam and ^ĉĪsâ is that 'Âdam, by Divine Decree, was entrusted, together with Eve and their progeny, to inhabit the earth until the Day of Resurrection. But ^ĉĪsâ did not get married, and was raised up to assume the angelic origin from which he came when the

angel breathed into his mother (of Our Spirit and made her and her son a sign to the worlds) "Al-'Anbiyâ, The Prophets- 91". From his cradle, ^عÎsâ said to those who accused his mother of unlawful conception, and to the whole world, (Surely I am a bondman = slave, worshipper of 'Allâh; He has brought me the Book and made me a Prophet. And He has made me blessed wherever I may be and He has enjoined upon me prayer and Zakât (poor-dues) as long as I am alive.. And peace be upon me, the day I was begotten and the day I die, and the day I am made to rise again alive). "Maryam, Mary- 30-31-33".

4. The teachings of Christ centered around the love of God " 'Allâh" and love for fellow-men "Luke xii. 29-31". Christ also emphasized that God "^عAllâh" calls for forgiveness, mercy, righteousness, and truth... in the realm of daily life, for (we are to forgive our brethren as we ask to be forgiven) "Matt. vi. 12; Luke xi.4".
5. The concept of "Jesus as the son of God" came into existence with St. Paul's epistles; and the same concept was interpreted into the Trinity (in Jewish sources, although modified by Greek influence). Then the Nicene creed spoke of Jesus (God who redeemed the soul. Through him men were to understand the Father and to understand themselves as God's children) "Enc. Brit Vol. 5.p. 533". Then the Catholic church began to take form in the 2nd century, and through Luther, Western Christianity became divided into Catholic and Protestant, although in Russia, Egypt and other areas the Orthodox church still represents the official doctrine; and still in the United states, they speak of 350 different denominations.

Migration

In spite of assumed secularism, differences between various Christian sects drove many European Christians to leave Europe and migrate to the New World. These migrations first came from Spain and from England to settle in South and North Americas. Such migrations, reminiscent of Muslim migration to Ethiopia and Madînah, did not enjoy the tolerant attitude that early Muslims experienced in either Madînah or Ethiopia; for, in the early days, "a good Indian was a dead Indian". Such American natives were replaced later by Africans to work as slaves for the European newcomers.

The Crusades

The first encounters between Muslims and Christians were tolerant and even cordial in Ethiopia and in Rome, especially as compared with contacts with polytheism on the eastern side of the world. But when Muslim invasions of Europe began to take on the mundane desire of power and dominion, the reactions, as expected, were the military offensives, sometimes under the aspect of holy war and at others in retaliatory offensives.

During the past two centuries, the occupation of Muslim countries by the Christian West led to the growth of the popular enthusiasm for freedom, after decades of Western colonial rule, during which some Muslim soldiers were led by Western armies to free Eastern Asia from Japanese rule while chanting the Muslim call "Allâhu 'Akbar, "Allâh is Greater". But by the end of the last century, the call for tolerance in various fields led by such eminent figures as Prince Charles, and various European dignitaries, Ecclesiastical and Political, is gaining ground for mutual understanding and co-operation.

III. Islam

The history of the Prophet Muḥammad, and his two successors 'Abû Bakr and 'Umar, may be taken as an ideal period in Muslim civilisation, as well as human history. The Prophet's migration from Makkah, after 13 years of persecution, enabled him through Divine Revelation, to establish the first Muslim state in modern times. The defence of the State against Jewish aggression, enabled the believers to propagate ʾIslâm in Asia and Africa during the time of the four Caliphs with a sense of dedication and tolerance. During the time of ʿUthmân, the third Caliph, intrigues began to take shape, and soon ʿUthmân was killed. During the time of the fourth Caliph ʿAlî, there was dissension and he was also killed by treacherous rebels.

2. With the reign of the ʾUmayyads and the ʿAbbasids, the Muslim state began to grow as a naval power with the resultant contacts with Europe. Although Constantinople was not yet conquered, Muslims began to achieve relative supremacy over the neighboring seas. Such a supremacy was achieved only during the Turkish rule; and for the first time in modern history, we are witnessing the fact that mastery over the seas means mastery over the world, for several centuries.

3. Then the Crusades began in 1095, when the European forces captured Palestine, including Jerusalem and other coastal areas of Syria. After the battle of Hittîn, Şalâhuddîn, who died in 1194, was able to recapture Jerusalem and the whole of Palestine. Later on, battles between Europe and Turkey went on, during which time Muslims ruled over most of Asia, and large areas in the Balkans, until (the time of 'Atâ.- Turk, who relinquished the role of Caliph, and thus the fall of the Caliphate was declared in 1924.

Chapter Three

I. The Human Self

1. In The Glorious Qur'ân, 'Allâh, Exalted be He, tells us that we were created from one self (He is The One Who crated you "all" of one self, and made of it its spouse that he might serenely dwell with her "Al ʿAṣrâf, The Battlements-189". It is worthy of note here that the word "nafs" = self "is feminine in all of its occurrences in the Glorious Qu ʿrân; and the distinction between "nafs = self" and rūḥ (Spirit) is always kept clear.
2. Every self is going to die, for (Every self will be tasting of death; and surely you shall be paid your rewads in full only on the Day of the Resurrection) " 'Al ʿImrân, The House of ʿImrân- 185". The binding law on every self is that it does not know what it is going to earn in future, or even the land where it dies, (and in no way does any self realize what it shall earn tomorrow; and in no way does any self realize in whichever land it shall die) "Luqmân, The Sage- 34".
3. A self has a definite physical form in the shape of the body (jism), which is provided with all organs that would enable it to provide for its livelihood and all other human activities. A preserver = guardian is taking care of every self, (Decidedly over every self is a assuredly a preserver) " 'At-Târiq. The Night Visitant- 4". This preserver is a guardian that registers all human activities and even the date of death.

4. Before every self is to die, it is tempted during its life to evil and good deeds, (And (by) the self and That which molded it; So he inspired it with its impiety and its piety. He has already prospered who has cleansed it. And he has already gained disappointment who stunts it) " 'Ash-Shams, The Sun- 7-10".

Here the concepts of impiety and piety are inspired in the human self, with the term impiety having precedence over piety, indicating, in the incomparably precise wording of the Glorious Qur'ân, that human leaning towards impiety is much more habitual than restraining his inclinations on the way of piety.

5. This trial through evil and good is again one of the secrets of human achievement of righteousness or falling into evil, for such trial is the test for human purification or cleansing. Actually the word Zakâh means basically purification both on the individual and social planes. Individually, it means personal fight against Satanic allurements, and inclination towards righteousness. Socially it means purification through poor-dues and alms, from worldly inducements. As has been mentioned before, Zakâh (poor-dues) is the most effective means for fighting usury, and the establishment of an economically and socially stable state.
6. Temptation through good and evil has the final objective of achieving the human capability for patience and endurance for (Every self shall be tasting (of) death; and We try you with evil and good for a temptation; and to Us you shall be returned "Al-Anbiyâ³, The Propets- 35". Good deeds are under the guardianship of the Angels, and evil acts are the product of Satanic allurements. And we have made some of you a temptation for "some" others; Will you

endure patiently? And your Lord has been Ever-Beholding) " 'Al-Furqân, The Criterion- 20".

7. About the death of the (self), the Glorious Qur'ân tells us that there are many occasions of the cessation of life to the self. One final cessation comes with death, while the other numerous occasions take place during sleep; for during sleep, the (self=nafs) is taken up to its Lord, and is returned at awakening, while, with death, no return of the self is possible in this world. Thus the Glorious Words say, ('Allâh takes up the selves at the time of their death and those which have not died, in their sleeping. Then He holds back the ones against which He has decreed death, and sends the others till a stated term. Surely in that are indeed signs for a people who meditate). 'Az-Zumar, The Hordes- 42".
8. It is to be noted that the word/ nafas/ "breath" has the same root as the word/ nafs/ "self; Again, the word/ nafs/ has many occurrences in the plural form/ ðanfus/; while the plural form/ nufûs/ "selves" occurs only twice in the Glorious Qur'ân. These two last instances are not related to worldly life.

II. The Jinn:

1. To human beings, many of the creatures of Allâh are made visible, inhabiting the land, sea and air. Above the earth, there is the sky "the Lower Heaven, with the sun, moon, and the innumerable stars and constellations. The unseen worlds are also beyond human comprehension, although they exist in the Universe unceasingly until they Day of the Resurrection.
2. The jinn (Jânn) were created from fire before 'Âdam; and as one of

the Jinn, Satan (Iblīs) refused to prostrate himself before 'Ādam, after Allāh breathed His Spirit into the father of mankind. Devilish leaders of jinn and of humanity are still following the footsteps of Iblīs in seducing many of the jinn and many of mankind, although mankind and jinn were created to worship 'Allāh, (And in no way did I create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me) Ath- Thariyât, The Winnowers- 56".

3. Some of the jinn are not evil-doers, a company of whom heard the Glorious Qur'ân recited by Muḥammad, the Messenger, and declared their surrender to the Will of Allāh, and became Muslims as we are told in the Divine Revelation:

(Say, "It has been revealed to me that a batch of the jinn listened; and then they said, 'Surely we have heard a wondrous Qur'ân. It guides to righteousness; so we believe in it, and so we will never associate with our Lord anyone. And "we believe" that He, Supremely Exalted is our Lord's Dignity, in no way has He taken to Him either a female companion or a child. and that "some" men of the mankind used to take refuge with "some" men of the jinn; so they increased them in vileness) " 'Al-Jinn, The Jinn- 1- 6".

4. The history of the jinn in Sulaymân's (Solomon's) kingdom is highly indicative of their ability for superhuman activity for good and evil. So, Sulaymân addressed his people that he knew the language of birds and ants, (And his hosts were mustered to Sulaymân, of the jinn, and mankind and birds, duly disposed) " 'An-Naml, The Ant-17". They were all ready to march wherever he ordered them.

III. The Angels

1. Sulaymân's history speaks of the jinn, the believing jinn in his service, and the disbelieving ones teaching people sorcery, even accusing Sulaymân of disbelief. Here the Revelation in the Glorious Qur'ân states explicitly and vividly (and in no way did Sulaymân disbelieve; but the Satans disbelieved, teaching people sorcery, and that which was sent down upon the two Angels in Bâbil (Babylon), Hârût and Mârût. And in no way did the two Angels teach it to anyone before they said, We are only a temptation; so do not disbelieve) "Al-Baqarah, The Cow-102".
2. But Angels are commonly Messengers calling for belief in Allah and the Last Day. To Muslims, Jibrîl (Gabriel) is the outstanding Angel entrusted by Allah with His Revelation to Muḥammad, the final Prophet and Messenger. The name Jibrîl is mentioned only three times in the Glorious Qur'ân: once in these Words (Say: Whosoever is an enemy to Jibrîl, surely then it is he who has been sending it "the Qur'ân" down upon your breast by the permission of Allah , sincerely verifying what was before it and for a guidance and good tidings to the believers) "Al-Baqarah, The Cow-97". The second time Jibrîl's name is mentioned is in "Tahrîm, Prohibition- 4" where Allah , Exalted be He, and Jibrîl, as well as the Angels and the devout believers are backers of the Prophet in case anybody disobeys, even his two most honored wives.
3. The third time Jibrîl's name is mentioned is together with of Mîkâl (Michael) in "Al-Baqarah, The Cow-98" in these Words (Whosoever is an enemy to Allah and His Angels and His Messengers, and Jibrîl and Mîkâl, then surely 'Allah is an enemy to the disbelievers).

At other times Jibrîl is called 'Ar-Rûh "The Spirit" or the Holy Spirit.

This is the same Spirit of the Command of ٱAllah that was breathed in ٱAdam and that was breathed in Maryam, the Virgin Mary. But the real nature of this Spirit is beyond human knowledge. In 'Al-'Isrâ', The Night Journey -85", we have these Words (And they ask you about the Spirit, say, The Spirit is of the Command of ٱAllâh; and in no way have you been brought knowledge except a little).

4. Within the limited knowledge of mankind, we have been told, according to the Christian tradition that "God is love". As distinct from this conception, we are told in the Glorious Qur'ân that "ٱAllâh is The Light, "ٱAn-Nûr, The Light- 35". The King, The Creator, the Peace " 'Al-Ḥashr, The Mustering- 23-24". The Lord, The God, " 'An-Nâs, Mankind- 1-3". However, these Names have been traditionally called Attributes, and these Attributes have been traditionally known to be 99; but in fact, they are innumerable, like His Words, which are also innumerable, (Say 'If the sea were a constant supply for the Words of my Lord, indeed the sea would be depleted, even if we come, with a replenishment the like of it," 'Al-Kahf, The Cave- 109"
5. One of the Attributes of 'Allâh is that (He has not begotten, and has not been begotten "ٱAl-'Iklâs, Faithfulness- 3". Another Attribute of 'Allâh is that He is The Supremely Hegemonic; and as an indication of the superiority of the Last Revelation sent down upon Muḥammad, the prayer and peace of 'Allâh be upon him, 'Allah, Exalted be He, has called His Last Revelation as supremely Hege-

monic over all previous Divine Revelations, (And We have sent to you the Book with the Truth, sincerely verifying whatever of the Book that was before it, and supremely Hegemonic over it) "Al-Mâ'idah, The Table- 48".

Chapter Four

Worship in ʿIslām

1. To be ready for Eternity in the Hereafter, every religion has prescribed for its believers different rites of worship. Some religious beliefs allow worshipping various deities, while ʿIslām insistently asks Muslims to worship 'Allāh alone, The Creator of all forms of beings.
2. In ʿIslām, other rites of worship include, besides Prayers, Fasting (Ṣawm), Poor-dues (Zakāh), Defence (Jihād) , and Pilgrimage (Ḥajj).

All such rites help to inculcate in the minds of Muslims devotion to 'Allāh, and they constitute the only way to Eternity in the Garden of Bliss in the Hereafter, after Resurrection. Failure to extol the praise of 'Allāh by the performance of these acts of worship will inevitably lead to Eternity in the Fire of Hell.

3. What follows in the coming pages is a very quick review of the rites of worship in ʿIslām leading to Eternal Bliss in the Hereafter, if these rites are devoutly and sincerely performed.

I. Prayers

1. Prayers are a form of worship, the expression both of praise and of supplication. Those who hymn the praise of the Giver and Sustainer of life in prayers realize that it was not mere coincidence that prayers were established when Muḥammad was nearest to ʿAllāh. The tradition of the ascension reports that during that night, five prayers were enjoined and that these five prayers equalled fifty in

worth and reward. For the believer, prayers provide the opportunity for the glorification of the Giver of all Good and of all Mercy, of His grace and His bounty. Convinced of the wonderful glories of the Creator, the human being yearns for more of His mercy. Most of all, he requests guidance to the straight path. For this, his only means is obedience; it is not blind obedience, but obedience with vision that transcends the physical limitations of human nature.

2. With praise and supplication, the believer achieves a deep sense of satisfaction, derived from the fact that the Bestower of Life and Death is so near that he can be in His presence any time of day or night. In this, prayers are a normal vital act by which the little island of the human personality suddenly discovers its situation in a larger whole of life. This may explain the Prophetic address to Bilâl, when the Prophet directed him to call for prayers at a time of distress, "Let us now have comfort in prayers". It was also this deep sense of relief that made the Prophet at times stay so long in one bowing or a single prostration that some of his followers suspected that the Prophet might have forgotten that he was praying. It was also this realization of one's nearness to ³Âllâh through prayers that minor discomforts in prayers were actually a source of pleasure. Authentic traditions report that the Prophet used to pray so often (in) winter nights that his feet became swollen. Asked why he exerted himself so tirelessly in prayers, he answered: Should I not be a thankful servant?"

Again, this pleasure, derived from prayers and the easy access to His Presence, illustrate a unique characteristic of Muslim worship. It is the fact that "each human being is his own priest". The only

time taken to prepare oneself for this comforting journey is usually the time for the performance of ablution.

3. The heart of prayers is humility. The Qurân says: "Prosperous indeed are the believers who are submissive in their prayers". Like every devotional act, prayers have their ceremonies starting with ablution, but these ceremonies do not form the basic experience in praying. What really counts is the devotional state of the worshipper. "Their flesh and their blood reach not Âllâh, but the devotion from you reaches Him".

On the authority of Mû^câth Ibn Jabal, it is reported that the Prophet said: "It is not one sixth nor one tenth of a man's devotion which is acceptable to ³Allâh, but only such portion thereof as he offers with understanding and true devotional spirit".

Praise and supplication can only be offered to the Creator with a deep sense of humility. It is humility that is engendered by the insistence of ³Islâm on the clear line of demarcation between what is human and what is Divine. One of the practices of the early Muslims to achieve this, was to concentrate fully on recitations from the Qu³rân in prayers. That may be one of the reasons why they recited so much of the Qu³rân while praying. Some of them did actually recite hundreds of verses in one rak'ah.

4. However paradoxical it might appear, from this sense of humility is derived a feeling of human dignity. This seems to be a common feature in all religions, and it appears to be the only significant explanation of the spirit of martyrdom in the history of religions. At a time when life and death are equated, it is easy to choose life in death. With humility, there is a real sense of freedom from fear of

anything and everything save ٱAllâh's anger, and it is this freedom from fear that is basic to any real sense of human dignity. This is moral freedom.

5. The physical movements in prayers are also important. With the sense of humility implied by making some of the noblest parts of the human body touch the ground, these movements are also directed to a single spot, which is central to Muslim worship as a whole. All worshippers face the "qiblah" of prayer in Makkah and this, by itself, is a unifying factor in a religion whose two basic pillars are Oneness and unity: Oneness of ٱAllâh, and the unity of both Prophethood and of the human race as a whole.
6. There is perhaps nothing more indicative of the sense of equality that ٱIslâm insists on than the sight of a Muslim congregation at prayers. Discrimination, racial and social, does not exist and no agency has done this more effectively than the mosque. Distinctions of race and nationality exist in ٱIslâm only for purposes of identification, but they do not lead to discrimination. The institution of prayers had been, from its very beginning, one of the means of welding all the different tribal and social sections of the Madinese community together. The Muٱaththin, who called for prayers was Bilâl, the Abyssinian. This sense of equality in the face of ٱAllâh is the proper mechanism for engendering a social consciousness that takes its strength from human brotherhood, and brotherhood paves the way for real love.
7. From the Fâtiḥa which is to be recited in every rak'ah of prayers the following concepts are worthy of note:

1. The universe is a very complex system.
2. Man is not the center of the universe.
3. This life is one stage in man's journey to eternity.
4. Nobody and nothing beside ٱAllâh is worthy of worship.
5. Nobody and nothing beside ٱAllâh can give us real help.
6. There is only one straight Path, that of the believers, all other paths lead nowhere.
7. The straight Path is that of a long line of Prophets and Messengers.
8. Disobedience does not lead to the straight Path.
9. Mythology cannot be a substitute for true religion.
10. Other religions deviate from the straight Path.

Tashahhud:

The bearing witness or "*Tashahhud*" also contains certain affirmations:

1. ٱAllâh is the source of good, and everything good goes to Him.
2. Peace follows upon real belief.
3. The unity of believers.
4. The unity of Prophethood from ٱIbâhîm to Muḥammad.
5. The Oneness of ٱAllâh, Muḥammad being His messenger,, bondnan and worshipper

II. Fasting (Ṣawm)

Another unique moral characteristic of ٱIslâm is the prescribed in-

stitution of Fasting. Literally defined, fasting means to abstain "completely" from foods, drinks, intimate intercourses and smoking, before the break of dawn till sunset, during the entire month of Ramaḍân, the ninth month of Muslim year. But if we restrict the meaning of Fasting to this literal sense, we would be mistaken.

When ʿIslâm introduced this matchless institution, it planted an evergrowing tree of infinite virtue and invaluable products. Here is an explanation of the meaning of Fasting:

1. It teaches man the principle of sincere Love, because when he observes Fasting, he does it out of deep love for ʿAllâh.
2. It equips man with a creative sense of Hope and an optimistic outlook on life, because when he fasts, he is hoping to please Him and is seeking His Grace.
3. It imbues man with a genuine virtue of effective Devotion, honest Dedication', because he who fasts does so for ʿAllâh and only for His sake alone.
4. It cultivates in man a vigilant and sound Conscience, because in fasting especially, there is no mundane authority to check man's behavior or compel him to observe Fasting.
5. It indoctrinates man in Patience and Unselfishness because when he fasts he feels the pains of deprivation but endures patiently. Truly this deprivation may be only temporary, yet there is no doubt that the experience makes him realize the severe effects of such pains on others, who might be deprived of essential commodities for days or weeks or probably months together.

Now, someone may be tempted to raise the objection: if this is the case with the institution of Fasting, and if this is the picture of ʾIslām in this respect, why are the Muslims not living in a Utopia? To such an objection we can only say that the Muslims have lived in and enjoyed a Utopia in a certain epoch of their history. The realization of that Utopia was a phenomenon of a unique achievement in the history of mankind. We say unique, because no religion or social system other than ʾIslām has ever been able to realize its ideals in reality. The Utopia of other religions and social systems has always remained in the category of theories or wishful thinking, sometimes clear, sometimes vague, sometimes near, most of the time far away. But the Utopia of ʾIslām was realized and put into practice. In a human and practical sense, this means that the Utopia of ʾIslām can be re-established once again right here on this earth, and that it is raised on solid foundations and practicable principles.

III. Poor-Dues (Zakâh)

Another exceptionally remarkable institution and major pillar of ʾIslām is the Zakâh. To the Qurʾānic word , Zakâh and the meaning it conveys, there is no equivalent in any other language as far as we know. It is not just a form of charity or tax or tithe. Nor is it simply an expression of kindness; it is all of these combined and much more. It is not merely a deduction of a certain percentage from one's property, but an abundant enrichment and moral investment. It is not simply a voluntary contribution to someone or some cause, nor a government tax that a shrewd clever person can get away from. Rather, it is a duty enjoined by ʾAllâh and undertaken by Muslims in the interest of society as a whole. The Qurʾānic word Zakâh not only includes

charity, tithe, kindness, official tax, voluntary contributions; but it also combines with all these as well moral motives. That is why there can be no equivalent to the word Zakâh, since it may mean purity and evasion from sin.

1. Zakâh purifies the property of the people and clears it from the shares which do not belong to it any more, the shares which must be distributed among the due beneficiaries. When Zakâh is payable, a certain percentage of the wealth should be distributed immediately in the right manner, because the owner no longer has moral or legal possession of that percentage. If he fails to do so, he is obviously retaining something which does not belong to him. This is corruption and plain usurpation, moral legal and commercial. It means that the unlawfully retained percentage makes the whole lot impure and endangered. But, on the other hand, if the poor's dividends are distributed among due beneficiaries, the remaining portions of the lot will be pure,

It should also be remembered that the rate of 2.5% is only a minimum. In times of emergency or arising needs, there is no rate limit; the more one gives, the better it is for all concerned. The distribution of Zakâh serves all purposes for which numerous fund raising campaigns are launched. The Zakâh fund substitutes for all the other funds. It is authentically reported that there were times in the history of the Muslim administration when there was no person eligible to receive Zakâh: every subject, Muslim, Christian, and Jew of the vast Muslim empire, had enough to satisfy his needs, and the rulers had to deposit the Zakâh collections in the public Treasury. This shows that when the Zakâh law is enacted properly, it mini-

mizes the needs of the citizens and enriches the Public Treasury to such an extent that there may be no needy or poor, and that enormous amounts of surplus are available.

A disabled or an invalid poor Muslim is preferable to one who is able and capable of making some earnings. The contributor should use his best judgment in finding the most deserving beneficiaries.

The contributor should not seek pride or fame by carrying out this duty. He should make it as covert as possible so that he may not be victimized by hypocrisy or passion for vanity which nullifies all good deeds. However, if the disclosure of his name or the announcement of his contribution is likely to encourage others and stimulate them, it is all right to do so.

IV. JIHÂD

- What is Jihad?

With the first Revelation, came a short period of distress in the Prophet's life. Although he was comforted by his wife Khadijah, and by her cousin Waraqa [ؓ] Ibn Nawfal, he barely realized at the time the huge responsibility he had been entrusted with. For a humble orphan to guide the whole world, this seemed unthinkable at first. So "the very thought of being chosen out of all mankind, alone, with such a Message, appalled him at first. Recognition of the Divine nature of the Call he had received, involved a change in his whole mental outlook sufficiently disturbing to a sensitive and an honest mind, and also the forsaking of his quiet, honoured way of life".

The change was not merely mental; it was also physical; for without that physical change, he would not stand the weight of Revelation

upon him, to the extent that perspiration often dropped from his face even on the coldest of winter nights after the Angel had left him. Without that physical change, the ascent to Heaven would have been impossible.

It took thirteen years for this state of mind to change the humble orphan to the Divinely inspired leader of the world. The peaceful Call for ٱAllâh had to defend itself, after the establishment of the state in ٱAl-Madînah.

In one of the late Madînah sûras, the permission to defend the state was given:

﴿أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتَلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلَمُوا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ﴾ [الحج: ٣٩]
 ﴿الَّذِينَ أُخْرِجُوا مِنْ دِيَارِهِمْ بِغَيْرِ حَقٍّ إِلَّا أَنْ يَقُولُوا رَبُّنَا اللَّهُ وَلَوْلَا دَفْعُ اللَّهِ النَّاسَ بَعْضَهُمْ بِبَعْضٍ لَهَدَمَتْ صَوَامِعُ وَبِيَعٌ وَصَلَوَاتٌ وَمَسَاجِدٌ يُذَكَّرُ فِيهَا اسْمُ اللَّهِ كَثِيرًا وَلَيَنْصُرَنَّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَنْصُرُهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَقَوِيٌّ عَزِيزٌ﴾ [الحج: ٤٠].

"Those who have been fought are permitted (to fight), and ٱAllâh has determined to give them victory. Those who have been unjustly driven from their homes, only because they said: Our Lord is ٱAllâh; for had it not been for ٱAllâh's repelling some men by means of others, monasteries and churches and synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of ٱAllâh is often mentioned, would indeed have been pulled down. Indeed ٱAllâh does give victory to those who seek victory for Him. Surely ٱAllâh is indeed Ever- Powerful, Ever-Mighty". (Pilgrimage -39-40).

Herein are given the rules for self -defence, which is legitimate only for fighting against injustice and corruption. The Muslims had been gravely wronged in Makkah. They had been persecuted and forced out of their homes by the corrupt pagans. They left their homes

for ٱAl-Madīnah; and here their old enemy was coming from Makkah to fight them. The Muslims then are promised victory since they have adopted ٱIslām and have submitted to the fact the their Lord is ٱllāh. They also want victory in the name of ٱAllāh. Verse 41 that follows set the conditions for the justification of that victory: "putting up prayers, giving the zakāh, and enjoining the moral and forbidding the immoral". Without this right for self-defence, the whole history of humanity would have changed. Monasteries, churches, synagogues and mosques would have been destroyed, and corruption would have held dominion over all. The three revealed religions, Judaism, Christianity and ٱIslām would have disappeared from the surface of the earth.

This is the meaning and significance of Jihād in ٱIslām. From its basic meaning denoting a Muslim's duty to purify his own individual intentions and acts, the word "Jihād" should include defence against corruption and injustice anywhere on earth. It involves the preservation of the right of freedom of worship for all believers of revealed religions, tolerance for Christians and Jews, and the inalienable right of religious co-existence.

V. Pilgrimage (Hajj)

The final pillar and one of the finest institutions of ٱIslām is the Hajj or pilgrimage to Makkah. The performance of the Hajj is obligatory, at least once in a lifetime, upon every Muslim, male or female, who is mentally, financially and physically fit. The Muslim who is of responsible age, in fairly good health, and is financially capable and secure must make the Hajj at least once in his or her lifetime. Financial security here means that he should have enough to cover his own

expenses and those of his dependents, and to pay his debts, if he is in debt.

The course of Hajj is another unique characteristic of ٱIslām. It is enjoined by ٱAllāh to serve many purposes, among which are the following:

1. It is the largest annual convention of Faith where Muslims meet to know one another, study their common affairs and promote their general welfare. It is also the greatest regular conference of peace known in the history of mankind. In the course of Hajj, peace is the dominant theme; peace with ٱAllāh and one's self, peace with one another and with animals, peace with birds and even with insects. To disturb the peace of anyone or any creature in any shape or form is strictly prohibited.
2. It is a wholesome demonstration of the universality of ٱIslām and the brotherhood and equality of the Muslims. From all walks of life, from all trades and classes, and from every corner of the globe, the Muslims assemble at Makkah in response to the call of ٱAllāh. They dress in the same simple way, observe the same regulations, utter the same supplications at the same time in the same way, for the same end. There is no royalty, but loyalty of all to ٱAllāh. There is no aristocracy, but humility and devotion.
3. It is to confirm the commitment of the Muslims to ٱAllāh and their readiness to forsake the material interests in His service.
4. It is to acquaint the pilgrims with the religious and historical environment of the Prophet Muḥammad, so that they may derive warm devotion to their Faith.

5. It is to commemorate the Divine rituals observed by Abraham and Ishmael ^ﷺ (Ibrâhîm and ^ﷺ Ismâ'îl, who are known to have been the first pilgrims to the first Home of ^ﷻ Allâh on earth, i.e., the Ka'bah at (Makkah).
6. It is a reminder of the Grand Assembly on the Day of Judgment when people will stand equal before ^ﷻ Allâh waiting for their Final Destiny, and where no superiority of race or stock can be claimed. It is also a reminder of the fact that Makkah alone, in the whole existing world, was honoured by ^ﷻ Allâh in being the center of monotheism since the time of ^ﷺ Ibrâhîm, and that it will continue to be the centre of ^ﷻ Islâm, the religion of pure monotheism, till the end of time.

The Farewell Pilgrimage

- The Sermon:

The Prophet started to Makkah for his last Pilgrimage in the company of 30,000 Muslims on the 25th of Thilqa'dah. It took them ten days to reach Makkah. When he entered Makkah and saw the Home, he raised his right hand and prayed: "O ^ﷻ Allâh, increase this Home in honour, magnificence, bounty, reverence and piety". He entered the Mosque and made the seven rounds of ^ﷻ Al-Ka'bah, after which he prayed at the station of ^ﷺ Ibrâhîm. Then, going out to As Safâ, he went seven times between it and Al-Marwah; and those who were with him did the same.

On the eighth day of the month of Thil Hijjah, he rode to the valley of Minâ and spent the night there. After daybreak, he rode on to ^ﷻ Arafah, about thirteen miles from Makkah; and it is at the base of the Mount of Mercy that the Prophet stayed there the whole day.

Then the Prophet addressed the pilgrims, saying: "All praise and laudation are to ٱAllâh,... O men, listen to my words. I do not know whether I shall ever meet you in this place after this year. Surely your blood and your property are inviolable until you meet your Lord, even as this day and this month are inviolable. You will meet your Lord, and He will ask you of your deeds. O people, have I faithfully delivered to you my message?

[A loud murmur of assent by the people is heard "ٱAllâhumma na'am (O ٱAllâh, Yes!)" Then the Prophet raised his forefinger and said, "O ٱAllâh, Bear Witness!"].

He who has a pledge (أمانة), let him return it to him who entrusted him with it. Surely all usury is abolished, and you only have a right to your capitals, without your inflicting injustice on others, nor others inflicting injustice on you. ٱAllâh has decreed, 'No usury.' And surely the usury of ٱAl ٱAbbâs, son of ٱAbdil- Muṭṭalib is abolished, all of it. Surely all bloodshed in the pagan period is abolished; and surely the first blood is the blood of 'Âmir son of Rabî'ah (the Prophet's nephew)...

O people, Satan has despaired of ever being worshipped in your land, but if he can be obeyed in anything short of worship, he will be satisfied with matters you may despise and think of little account; so beware of him in your religion... Postponement of an inviolable month is only an excess of disbelief whereby those who disbelieve are led into error; they make it lawful (to fight in it) one year and make it unlawful another year to make up the number of months made unlawful by ٱAllâh, and make unlawful what ٱAllâh has made lawful. Surely time has completed its cycle and is now as it was on the day that ٱAllâh

created the heavens and the earth. The number of months with ٱAllâh is twelve; four of them are inviolable, three consecutive and Rajab, which is between Jumâdâ and Sha'bân. "O people have I faithfully delivered to you my message?" The answer came from the listeners, "ٱAllâhumma, na'am" "O ٱAllâh Yes!" Then the Prophet raised his finger and said, "O ٱAllâh, bear witness!"

"Surely you have rights over your wives and they have rights over you. You have the right that they should not defile your beds, and that they should not commit evident obscenity. If they do, ٱAllâh allows you to admonish them, and to forsake them in separate rooms, and to beat them but not with severity. If they refrain from these things, they have the right to provision and clothing with kindness. You are enjoined to treat women well, for surely they are helpless without you, unable to provide for themselves. Surely you have taken them as a trust from ٱAllâh, and their private parts have been made lawful to you by the word of ٱAllâh. O, people, be mindful of what I say for I have faithfully delivered my message to you. I have indeed left with you that which, if you hold fast to them, shall preserve you from all error, an evident Command, the Book of ٱAllâh, and the Sunnah of His Prophet. O people, hear my speech and understand it. You indeed know that every Muslim is a Muslim's brother, and that Muslims are brothers. Thus it is not lawful for anybody to take from his brother except what he gives him willingly; so do not do injustice to yourselves. O ٱAllâh, have I faithfully delivered the message?"

Then these words were revealed:

﴿الْيَوْمَ يَبْسُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا مِنْ دِينِكُمْ فَلَا تَخْشَوْهُمْ وَاخْشَوْنَ الْيَوْمَ أَكْمَلْتُ لَكُمْ دِينَكُمْ وَأَتَمَمْتُ عَلَيْكُمْ نِعْمَتِي وَرَضِيْتُ لَكُمْ الْإِسْلَامَ دِينًا﴾ [المائدة: ٣]

"...Today the disbelievers have despaired of (prevailing) against your religion, so do not be apprehensive of them, and be apprehensive of Me. Today I have completed for you your religion and have perfected My favour on you and it has been My pleasure (to choose) Islâm for you as a religion..."² Al-Mâ'idah-3".

Man and Eternity

Conclusion

1. Humanity has been an honored creation ever since the existence of 'Âdam in Eden; for indeed, the glorious Words of the Qur'ân explicitly state this fact, (And indeed We have already honored the seeds of 'Âdam and carried them in land and sea, and provided them with the good things, and graced them over many of whom We created with a marked graciousness) " 'Al-²Isrâ², The Night Jouney- 70".
2. Before 'Âdam, the jinn had been created, from whom Satan rose up defying the Command of 'Allâh to prostrate for ²Âdam as other creatures including the Angels, did. Since that time, Satan has been the most devilish enemy of the human race.
3. The constant battle between Satan and 'Âdam's progeny has been active on this earth. Through Satan's perpetual insinuations, man, in spite of the original Divine blessings, has been drawn into acts of injustice, ingratitude, and disbelief.
4. The long line of Messengers and Prophets have unshakably carried on the message of reclaiming humanity to the right Path. Eminent among these Messengers was ²Ibrâhîm (Abraham), to whom were born ²Ismâ^cil (Ishmael) and Ishâq (Isaac),.Then there came Mûsâ (Moses), ^cÎsâ (Jesus) and Muḥammad (prayer and peace of 'Allâh be upon them all).
5. To be ready for Eternity in the Hereafter, every religion has asked its believers to perform different rites, basic among which is prayer. Here ²Islâm insistently asks Muslims to perform prayers

and other rites to 'Allâh alone.

6. Every form of worship in ʿIslâm has both aspects: individual and social. Even in prayer and fasting, with the acquisition of the sense of personal purification, there is also the social phase of purity of behavior and benignity towards others. The rite of poor-dues has its manifest social effect in supplying the poor and needy with a minimum standard of living; and forbidding usury, has to go hand in hand with the giving of poor - duse.
7. In Jihâd, international relations are seen as the highest objective, by defending the weak and attempting to preserve peace through self-defence. During the performance of Pilgrimage millions of Muslims hurry to Makkah at the end of the Muslim year to declare their adherence to the basic belief: the Oneness of ʿAllâh.
8. In ʿIslâm, Eternity is available in Eden, for the righteous who believe in the Oneness of 'Allâh; and Eternity in Hell is mandatory upon these who lost their way in this world and did not sincerely adhere to righteousness as ordained by 'Allâh. But the end of such an Eternity is finally to be decided by the Word of 'Allâh.
9. About the Hereafter, the Qur'ân tells us, (So, for the ones who are wretched, then they shall be in the Fire; therein they shall be for them groaning and sighing. Eternally therein "abiding" so long as the heavens and the earth "endure," except for whatsoever your Lord decides; surely your Lord is The Superb Performer of whatsoever He wills. And as for the ones who are made happy, then they shall be in the Garden of "Eden", eternally therein "abiding", so long as the heavens and the earth "endure", except for whatever your Lord decides: a gift uninterrupted). "Hûd-106-107-108".
10. In the three Tracts offered, emphasis in "Moral Freedom" was on

The Oneness of 'Allâh; in "Islâm and World Peace", the main theme was on Islâm's insistence on the rite of Poor-Dues and the prohibition of usury. Here, in the preceding pages, the whole intent has been to show how Islâm guides to Eternity in Bliss through devotion to its basic rites, and warns against Eternity in Hell. Finally, even Eternity in the Hereafter will endure only for whatever "time" or "timelessness" our Lord 'Allâh, decides.

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About This Book

The concept of man's existence in the universe has been variously represented in different religions, some of which deny death and Resurrection, while others disbelieve in the unseen worlds of devils and angels.

The conception of these worlds, as presented in the Ever-Glorious Qur'ân, is comprehensive as a whole, and is still more detailed when dealing with the history of mankind ever since 'Âdam's creation in Eden.

'Âdam's fall and repentance, and the history of his descendants, together with all the Messengers sent for their guidance to the Right Path: all of this has been most vividly and repeatedly told in a manner that is Divinely uncorrupted and incorruptible.

It is made clear here that the Divine Will is beyond all relations between the world of man and the worlds of jinn and the spheres of the angels. The final Word is to 'Allâh for life and death in this world as well as after Resurrection.

To Him alone is the Decision about the end of this world, and the Decision for the duration of Eternity in the Hereafter.

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